

The Official USU Newsletter

the pulse

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USU expertise on point following Tucson tragedy



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Courtesy Photo

On the cover

Dr. Peter Rhee (USU SoM '87) above, is the chair of trauma at the University of Arizona Health Sciences Center in Tucson. Also pictured, USU interim chief of Neurology Army Col. (Dr.) Geoffrey Ling and Dr. James Ecklund (USU SoM '87) who is chair of neurosciences at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Virginia. (See story, page 3).



GSN Hosts Federal Nursing Service Chiefs

by MC1 Chad Hallford



Photo by Thomas Balfour

The Federal Nursing Service Council met on the USU campus in December 2010, hosted by Graduate School of Nursing Dean Ada Sue Hinshaw.

The Federal Nursing Service Chiefs (FNSC) for the Army, Navy, Air Force and PHS joined other distinguished members to attend the Federal Nursing Service Council conference held on campus, Dec. 9, 2010.

The conference, hosted by the USU Graduate School of Nursing, included Dean Dr. Ada Sue Hinshaw, an ex-officio member, along with the chief nursing officers from the Department of Veterans Affairs and American Red Cross.

"They are a very exciting group," said Dr. Hinshaw. "Each organization is committed to their own unique missions while simultaneously using the group as a mechanism to expand opportunity and capabilities within and across organizational boundaries."

"The FNSC was established with the purpose of coordinating between and collaborating amongst the federal service organization each council member represents," said Dr. Hinshaw.

The group addresses the challenges of ensuring clinical competencies and skill sustainment regardless of service or environment.

"From incorporating the latest battlefield initiatives, to funding the latest clinical research, while not over-looking current state licensing procedures, the group remains focused on how they can impact the training and education of the nurses of the federal force," said Dr. Hinshaw.

Dr. Hinshaw added, "The needs of the services, with the direction of the council, have molded the last two developments in our active-duty nurse practitioners programs. This includes the nurse psychology-mental health and perioperative nurse specialist degrees."

The Federal Service Nursing Council, established in 1943, currently represents 125,000 nurses with a beneficiary population exceeding 8.5 million.

Tucson tragedy highlights military medical education and training

by Christine Creenan-Jones



James Ecklund, M.D. (at podium) and Army Col. (Dr.) Geoffrey Ling were summoned to Tucson following the January 8, 2011 shooting that injured or killed more than a dozen individuals.



Peter Rhee, M.D., called on military medical expertise as part of his response to the Tucson shootings.

USU alumni have made profound contributions in the field of military medicine and in other areas of military and civilian life over the years. But, few have captured widespread media attention the way retired Navy Captain Peter Rhee, M.D., chief of trauma at the University Medical Center in Tucson, Arizona, did recently.

The skilled trauma surgeon, a 1987 USU F. Edward Hébert School of Medicine graduate, made headlines recently for his actions after a gunman opened fire outside of a crowded Arizona grocery store, injuring or killing more than a dozen people.

Dr. Rhee – educated by USU to expertly manage complex wounds in austere environments and under strenuous conditions – relied on more than 20 years of military medical experience to carry out life-saving procedures in the hours following the Tucson tragedy.

His unique abilities and quick response helped to save the life of Arizona Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, who was shot “through the head,” and several other injured spectators. Most gunshot wounds to the head are fatal, experts say,

but Rhee and his team in Tucson, along with the expertise of two other USU-affiliated experts, have proven that brain injuries don’t always end so grimly.

Shortly after the shooting, and before the complete impact of the injuries were clear to the media or general public, Dr. Rhee had the support of the United States military, in particular USU’s interim chief of Neurology Army Col. (Dr.) Geoffrey Ling, at his fingertips. Ling, who was enroute to Afghanistan as part of a brain injury assessment team convened by Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was accompanied by retired Army Colonel Jim Ecklund, M.D., a classmate of Rhee’s at USU, and a highly regarded neurosurgeon who had a good deal of experience caring for individuals with bullet injuries to the brain.

Both Ling and Ecklund were summoned by leadership at the Arizona hospital to consult on the complicated nature of the injuries, including those experienced by Congresswoman Giffords.

“Dr. Rhee requested our support because we are experienced in taking care of all types of traumatic brain

injuries, including penetrating ballistic injuries – the type of injury affecting Congresswoman Giffords,” said Ling.

Penetrating ballistics are rare wounds in community hospitals and medical centers, especially in Tucson, but they occur more frequently in warzones like Iraq, where all three USU physicians practiced together.

Dr. Rhee was a trauma surgeon supporting the Marines in Fallujah,” said Dr. Ling. “He provided the initial life-saving care to severely injured servicemembers. After they stabilized, Dr. Rhee would send patients to Dr. Ecklund and to me in Baghdad so we could begin brain and spinal cord care.”

The trio demonstrated similar professional collaboration at home, and they are being lauded for their efforts nationwide and here on campus.

“Drs. Rhee, Ling and Ecklund are a testament to the innovative medicine learned and taught at USU and practiced around the world,” said University President Charles Rice, M.D. “They embody the very ideals of military medicine, and have proven time and again their ability to provide the very best care under the most trying conditions.”

USU names Junior, Senior Employees of the Quarter

by Staff Sgt. Matthew Rosine



Photo by Thomas Balfour

Maria Smith

The USU recently named two of its outstanding civilians as the Junior and Senior Employees of the Quarter.

Maria Smith, a program support assistant with the USU Department of Preventive Medicine and Biometrics, Division of Tropical Public Health was named the Junior Employee of the Quarter.

Deborah Smith, a student travel resource manager with the USU School of Medicine was named as Senior Employee of the Quarter.

These awards were based on their outstanding support and excellent service of the USU mission.

Maria, who has been with the PMB/TPH division for 15 months, is a diligent professional as seen in her support of routine and specialized duties including coordinating overseas travel for students and administering the continuing medical education program for the department's seminar series.

"Maria Smith is the finest administrator I have worked with in more than 18 years as an active-duty officer," said Army Col. (Dr.) Rodney Coldren, assistant professor and director of Tropical Public Health. "She does not shrink from any appropriate task. She never needs to be shown more than once how to complete even complex tasks."



Photo by Thomas Balfour

Deborah Smith

As a testament to her hard work, Maria is routinely sought out by staff and faculty from throughout the department for guidance, assistance and advice. According to many faculty members, her efforts have substantially improved the quality of teaching provided to students because she removes the administrative burdens from faculty members.

"She does this without having to be asked," said Coldren. "She reaches out, anticipates and appropriately reacts and performs."

Deborah, who has 11 years experience in the department, provided her incredible commitment and experience toward ensuring excellence throughout the department.

During the University's recent financial system changes, coupled with severe complications in student travel due to a simultaneous fiscal year change, Deborah helped ensure seamless transitions. She coordinated and planned several critical meetings, well in advance of the fiscal year change, to help ensure the policies and procedures were finalized and in place before they were needed.

"Mrs. Smith is the most knowledgeable Defense Travel System

administrator I have ever worked with and her commitment to excellence is an invaluable service to the USU community," said Maj. Brandon Tourtillot, Air Force squadron commander in the USU company commanders' office. "Mrs. Smith has displayed unbelievable dedication and expertise during the past quarter in improving USU."

The Senior Employee of the Quarter's efforts have been as large as the job she manages. As the sole medical student Defense Travel System approving official, she has expertly managed a \$2.72 million budget while continuously looking for innovations in cost effective strategies to improve medical student travel.

Deborah was solely responsible for approving more than 110 student travel vouchers, valued at \$264,000 within one week, directly impacting the reimbursements for many third- and fourth-year medical students prior to university-mandated deadlines. This prevented potential financial hardship for medical students returning from recent temporary duty.

Mrs. Smith also took charge and coordinated more than 210 manual travel orders, valued at \$300,000. These orders were created, routed through students, verified and authorized within a 72-hour period, ensuring that students did not have a lapse in required temporary orders.

She also acts as the travel educational resource for the company commander's office and the School of Medicine students.

"Mrs. Smith's recent dedication to the University has been unprecedented and her attention to detail in protecting University funds has been phenomenal," said Tourtillot. "Deborah's work ethic is exemplary among her peers and she is well deserving of the Senior Employee of the Quarter recognition."

Building C kiosk expands JGB's reach

by MC1 Chad Hallford

For all those espresso enthusiasts and soup and sandwich aficionados, the vacancy left by William III's departure from Building C has been filled by the USU Café operator, JGB Café & Catering, with their new and soon-to-be-named kiosk.

Over the past several months, JGB has implemented renovations and upgrades, after USU support staff made needed improvements to the power and plumbing infrastructure of the kiosk area.

"All of us at JGB are thrilled to have the kiosk up and running and are looking forward to continuing to expand our offerings there," said Kathryn Troutman, on-site manager for JGB. The new location offers an extensive line of coffees, including varietals from all over the world and flavored coffees, teas, espresso beverages and chai lattes in addition to a full line of made-to-order sandwiches,

fruit salad and parfaits, and a daily soup offering. Future offerings will include fruit smoothies and protein shakes. They are already accepting credit cards at this site.

"Opening the kiosk is just our latest effort to please our customers. We believe in continuous improvement and hope to have something for everyone," said Troutman. "My wish for the new year is for our team to really become part of the community at USU and to truly get to know our customers so we can better address their needs."

From addressing special needs diets by offering gluten-free and diabetic-friendly offerings, to acquiring a second espresso machine for the cafeteria, to continually expanding healthy offerings, the JGB staff invites new ways for improving health, variety and quality of the selections on the menu.

Kiosk hours of operation are 6:30am to 3:30pm.

Something from their menu...

Panko Chicken

4 skinless boneless chicken breast halves
1 large egg
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh Italian parsley
2 teaspoons plus 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 cup panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)

Using meat mallet or rolling pin, pound chicken (in plastic bag or between sheets of wax paper) to 1/2-inch thickness. Whisk egg, parsley, and 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard in large bowl. Place chicken in egg mixture; turn to coat. Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Dip each chicken piece in panko; turn to coat. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken; cook until brown and cooked

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup low-salt chicken broth
3 tablespoons maple syrup
2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon coarse-grained mustard
1 tablespoon chilled unsalted butter

through, about 4 minutes per side.

Meanwhile, whisk broth, syrup, coarse-grained mustard, and remaining 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard in glass measuring cup.

Transfer chicken to plates. Add broth mixture to skillet; boil until reduced to 3/4 cup, stirring occasionally, about 4 minutes. Add butter; whisk until melted. Spoon sauce alongside chicken.

HPRC Health Tips

The Human Performance Resource Center Health Tips is a new column intended to provide the USU community with information to help develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Check out the HPRC website at: <http://humanperformanceresourcecenter.org>.

Get Fit 'on the job': Part 1

Getting to the Office

Walking or bicycling to work is your best bet for workday fitness. Studies show that people with active commutes have fewer risk factors for heart disease, including lower blood pressure, triglyceride and insulin levels, and are less likely to be overweight. If active commuting isn't practical for your entire trip to work, do as much as you can - take the bus, train or car and walk the last mile to your worksite. Or, pedal to work - but catch a ride home.

Built-In Fitness

Scheduling physical activity into your work day helps make it a habit. Once it's on your calendar, honor your exercise time just as you would any other appointment. You may need to reschedule occasionally, but at least it will be on the books - and you're more likely to get it done.

Keep It Simple

Your at-work exercise plan doesn't have to be complicated. Arrive early and walk briskly for 20-30 minutes. Invite a co-worker to join you at lunch. Or, squeeze in a workout before you head home instead of jumping right into traffic. Find an empty room and pump out a few push-ups or core exercises. Wear a pedometer, and increase your steps gradually until you average 10,000 or more steps a day.

The Pulse Spotlight:



Photo by Thomas Balfour

Name:

Diann Richko

Duty title:

Program Support Specialist, Department of Graduate Medical Education

How long have you worked at USU?

5 1/2 years

What brought you to USU?

I relocated within my research grant to a position here at USU.

What is your favorite part of USU?

All the staff. I have never worked anywhere where everyone is so helpful, friendly and there is great morale! USU is definitely a family.

What advice would you pass on to people new to USU?

Take advantage of all the courses offered, even if it has nothing to do with your job, but maybe with your own personal interests. There is so much offered to gain exposure to and to learn!

Editor's Note: If you know a hard-working under-recognized person in your department, submit their name and contact information, and they might be selected for the Pulse Spotlight. Please submit all nominees to usunewsletter@usuhs.mil. Nomination is not a guarantee for publication.

Pharmacology researcher awarded foundation grant

by Ken Frager



Photo by Ken Frager

Dr. Fereshteh Nugent, an assistant professor in the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Pharmacology department, was recently awarded a Whitehall Foundation grant-in-aid for her work entitled "Spike Timing-Dependent Plasticity of Inhibitory Synapses in the VTA."

"The \$30K grant, while relatively small, is a significant achievement for a new researcher, as it can help to build a foundation for future research funding," said Susan Rasmussen, Ph.D., director, Office of Program Development. Nugent has been on staff at USU since 2009.

According to Nugent, "Synaptic plasticity plays a role in memory and function, both positive and negative, and are important in the study of addictions and depression."

The Whitehall Foundation grant-in-aid emphasizes the support of young scientists at the beginning of their careers and productive senior scientists who wish to move into new fields of interest. Grants are presented three times a year for a one-year period and do not exceed \$30,000. All applications are judged on scientific merit and innovative aspects of the proposal, as well as on past performance and evidence of the applicant's continued productivity.

Distinguished Alumnus speaks with students, faculty



Photo by Thomas Balfour

Army Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Joseph Carvalho, speaks with Dr. Charles L. Rice, USU President, and School of Medicine Dean Larry Laughlin, during his recent visit back to the University. Carvalho, a 1983 USU graduate, is the commanding general of the Brooke Army Medical Center/Southern Regional Medical Command, at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He returned to the campus to address first- and second-year medical students, reflecting on his time as a student, his career, and on the opportunities that may be available to the students post-graduation.

Briefs

Dining In

Find out who is going to the grog this year at the USU 2011 Dining In.

Dust off your mess dress and join the party from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday March 5.

Tickets for the Dining In will go on sale beginning Jan. 31.

Look for more information as it becomes available.

Award nominations due

The award nomination packages for the upcoming Leonard and Wu Awards for Excellence in Research must be submitted by Jan. 31, 2011.

The Wu award is for excellence in the Basic Sciences and the Leonard award is for excellence in the Translational and Clinical Sciences.

Nominees must be either a member of the full-time faculty or an AFRRRI scientist at USU.

The award recipients will present their award lectures during the University's Research Week. Each recipient will also receive a memento and a cash award of \$2,500.

For more information about requirements in submitting a Leonard and Wu award package, contact Susan Rasmussen, Ph.D., at (301) 295-3303 or by e-mail at srasmussen@usuhs.mil.

Inclement weather policy

During the upcoming winter season, weather conditions may impact on the University's operating status.

If the USU operating status changes, it will be updated immediately on the University's homepage, www.usuhs.mil.

Additionally, a broadcast to the USU community via email and recorded phone message will be available.

To access the phone message, call (301) 295-3039.

In some cases, USU's status will be made available via local news and radio stations. However, all USU students, staff and faculty are encouraged to check the University's Web site regularly.

Using computer resources

Security incidents continue to be a drain to limited USU Information Assurance manpower. The following highlight current DoD policy and best practices:

Personnel must not install self-coded or non-licensed software on network resources; add, remove, configure, or attempt to modify USU computer operating systems or programs; move audio/visual or network cables, computers or attempt to connect personal computers to the network including MDL and lecture hall spaces; connect personal devices except for those previously authorized by NOC; download pornographic material and store or display offensive material, such as racist literature, sexually harassing or obscene language or material; store or process classified information on any USU system.

Personnel must not permit unauthorized individuals access to a government-owned or government-operated system or program; access online gambling, games and social engineering sites.

ESC meetings

The Enlisted Social Committee holds its monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of every month.

Meetings are held at 9:30 a.m. in the cafeteria's small dining room.

Being a part of the ESC is an excellent way for USU enlisted personnel to actively pursue volunteer opportunities at USU.

50th Anniversary Web site

The Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute will be launching a new Web site to help celebrate the institute's 50th Anniversary.

The Web site is scheduled to launch this year and highlights AFRRRI's rich history and heritage. It also provides users with the opportunity to learn more about the unique mission at AFRRRI.

SME List

The Office of External Affairs at USU continues to update the university's Subject Matter Experts list and we are seeking your assistance. Faculty and staff are encouraged to take a few minutes to complete the short form at <http://www.usuhs.mil/vpe/vpesme.html> so we can be sure you are included and that your information is correct. You can be as specific as you would like within the topic areas. If you are unsure whether you are already included in the database you can check on the USU public web site <http://www.usuhs.mil/vpe/ususubjectmatterexperts.html>. Thank you for your assistance. If you have questions or need additional space please contact Ken Frager (kenneth.frager@usuhs.mil) directly with any details or concerns.

Helpdesk Closure:

The NOC helpdesk is closed for training on Thursdays from 10 to 11 a.m.

During this time, you can leave a voicemail message at 301-295-9800, utilize the HEAT Self Service (<http://www.usuhs.mil/uis/forms/trouble.html>), or email help@usuhs.mil.

If an emergency should arise, please call 301-295-9870.

Exercise/Fitness Areas:

Physical Fitness training should be conducted in designated areas.

The only authorized space for PT within the university is room G060.

The campus' Student Community Lounge area is also authorized, but only during specified PFT testing dates or times.



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